

January 2003

From the Captain's Desk

Dear Shipmates,

Happy New Year! Now that the holiday season has passed, it is time to focus on the New Year and the future of the Naval Reserve. Since 20 July 2003, when the Naval Reserve surface and air communities realigned and merged into the Commander, Naval Reserve Forces Command (COMNAVRESFORCOM), our cultural change focus has been on improvement of customer service within our organization. I want to address and review some of the advances that have taken place in the last two Quarters.

First, I want to formally introduce the new and improved Readiness Command Southwest (REDCOM SW) website at www.redcomsouthwest.navy.mil. Effective communication is an integral part of any good customer service interaction. With this in mind, the primary purpose of this web page is to communicate items of interest to the Naval Reserve constituency within REDCOM SW. In addition to being an excellent stand alone resource, this web page provides links to other sources of information that should prove useful to your Naval Reserve careers in a myriad of areas. I invite each and every one of you to visit the web site frequently and to utilize the customer feedback mechanism to communicate your suggestions, recommendations, needs and desires.

Next, the most recent Naval Reserve realignment itself streamlined how the Naval Reserve headquarters staff in New Orleans does business both up-and-down the chain of command. Significant improvement has already been observed as a result of this streamlining.

In August 2002, the New Order Writing System (NOWS) was launched and, although the system has experienced some minor glitches, overall the improvement in our ability to plan, schedule and execute IDTT, ADT and AT has improved exponentially. Since order writing and travel scheduling is one of our core functions in the Naval Reserve, this was a major step in the right direction.

Next, in September 2002, COMNAVRESFORCOM organized and established a new Pay and Systems Code on the staff and concurrently streamlined the pay trouble ticket process, which effectively allows your Naval Reserve Activity (NRA) to better serve you if and when Naval Reserve pay issues arise. Since its inception, this organizational change has had a significant positive impact on our ability to identify and quickly correct pay problems experienced by our drilling reserve population.

Most recently, in December 2002, COMNAVRESFORCOM promulgated the "Naval Reserve Force Customer Service Standards" delineating the minimum level of service each drilling reservist can expect as the primary customer in our organization. I emphasize that these standards are the minimum expectation and that we here within the REDCOM SW region will always strive to provide the best possible "world class" service to all of our customers, including drilling reservists, full-time support staffs at the echelon III, IV and V levels and, of course, our supported active duty gaining commands.

Although the above initiatives have provided a good start in the much needed customer service cultural change within our organization, many other equally important initiatives are being staffed and considered by the Naval Reserve Echelon III and IV command leadership which, collectively, should enhance significant improvements in our organization's overall efficiency and professionalism. For additional information regarding these and other initiatives, check the COMNAVRESFORCOM and REDCOM SW web pages at www.navres.navy.mil and www.redcomsouthwest.navy.mil, respectively.

Lastly, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the current status of mobilization. To date, within REDCOM SW, a total of 1,421 of our REDCOM SW shipmates have been mobilized in support of Operations Enduring Freedom, Noble Eagle and potential Persian Gulf operations. Of these, 533 have been demobilized and 888 currently remain on active duty. Many of these individuals were mobilized just before or after the holiday season. By all accounts, our mobilized shipmates are playing a key role in augmenting our active duty counterparts in direct combat mission areas and critical backfill areas, as well. This reality again highlights the importance of individual and collective unit mobilization readiness. I ask you all to continue to review your own personal mobilization readiness posture and ensure that your chain of command is informed accordingly.

I wish you all fair winds and following seas, Godspeed, safety and prosperity as we enter the fourth year of the new millennium!

Sincerely,



G. M. ERICKSON
Captain, U.S. Naval Reserve